



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

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Alok Bhatt

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Alok Bhatt. I serve as Legislative Analyst for the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (APAAC).

APAAC writes in strong support of Raised Bill 5131: An Act Establishing a Task Force on Nail Salons and Nail Technicians.

While we do not presently have reliable numbers, APAAC is acutely aware of the large Asian representation in Connecticut's nail salon industry.

In our continuing outreach and research APAAC has learned of various issues facing the nail salon industry.

Widely-read media reports have emphasized the poor working conditions employees in the nail salon industry often endure<sup>1</sup>. APAAC has learned of many industry health issues after speaking with individuals with experience in the nail salons. Our conversations with ally advocates have confirmed much of what we heard from community members. Public health concerns facing workers include the sanitation of tools, proper ventilation of salon premises, physical and mental duress, inhalation of chemical ingredients, risks associated with daily, prolonged physical contact with the hands and feet of consumers, to cite only a few.

Considering the myriad, complex health and labor issues in the nail salon industry, APAAC respectfully recommends that the Task Force proposed in Raised Bill 5131 expand its purview to include health concerns facing nail salon workers. While licensing may be a helpful measure, though potentially prohibitive for poor or new immigrants, APAAC believes the health and well-being of salon workers a priority equal to that of consumers.

APAAC believes in reforming the salon industry with the collaboration of owners, workers, and advocates. We feel a comprehensive approach can address the labor and public health concerns facing the nail salon industry.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/10/nyregion/at-nail-salons-in-nyc-manicurists-are-underpaid-and-unprotected.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/10/nyregion/at-nail-salons-in-nyc-manicurists-are-underpaid-and-unprotected.html?_r=0)



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Additionally, considering the significant impact of nail salon regulation on APA communities in Connecticut, APAAC submits that a member of our Commission, or a designee thereof, for Task Force membership. If established, APAAC hopes to work closely with the Task Force to fulfill our charge of engaging and informing our communities to produce reliable policy recommendations.

APAAC thanks the Committee for its time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Alok Bhatt  
*Legislative Analyst, APAAC*

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